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"To the devil with them all! Why shall I not myself write this act? The verses will not be as finished, but what matter! The music is the important thing. To the work, and leave these idlers to themselves. *E son poeta anch'io!*"

He returned home, and placing himself at his desk, sought a subject. From dint of searching, he recollected a little comic piece, entitled *La Sonnette de nuit*. He had not the pamphlet, but he had memory, that iron memory which had never failed him. He set himself to the work, and wrote down his verses. They were not worse than most of those of the librettists of the ancient *répertoire*.

Then, underneath, he strewed the most brilliant and the freshest blossoms of his fancy, and made of it a charming little opera *bouffe*, which he entitled: *Il Campanello*.

Ronconi, the celebrated Ronconi, did not disdain to create the rôle of the apothecary. The success was immense. The musician shared the honors of the poet.

The librettists were alarmed. "*Diable! diable!*" said they murmuring, "but if he writes himself his librettos, we are lost?"

This complaint reached Donizetti. He laughed in his beard.

"Ah, is it so?" he said. "Well, I am asked for an opera in one act for the Fondo; I am hurried for time. If I address myself to these grumblers, it will never be done; I will myself make this little poem. The librettists will cry, but let them reassure themselves; it will be the last.

It was thus that he took *Le Chalet* and made *Betty*.

#### SIGHT-SEEING IN GERMANY.

(CONTINUED.)

According to the street boys and street organs Arditì is the most popular man in Germany. They whistle him and grind him morning, noon, and night, until at last you lose all patience with him. The Bacio, whether musically or practically considered, is always diverting, especially as a duet; but you may have too much of it. By the way, I wonder how it's spelt, with one or two c's? I never knew. It is not of much importance, as the number of c's perhaps serve to indicate the nature of the particular article referred to—thus, *Il Bacio dolce* may safely be written with one, the *Ba* in such cases being long; *Il Baccio staccato* with two, the *cio* being short; *Il Baccio rubato* (*anglice*, smack) with three, and so on *ad infinitum* if the original intention has become impossible to carry out, or the action itself is a mere matter of form. William Chappell says the Bacio was even more popular in the seventeenth century than it is at the present day. The learned antiquary seems to have forgotten Arditì when making the interesting statement, which, moreover, let us hope, is somewhat exaggerated. He declares it was a custom to which the Puritans had a real or pretended aversion, and that before their time it was not only customary to salute a partner at the commencement and end of a dance, but also on first meeting a fair friend in the morning or on taking leave of her. How is it possible to keep one's temper on hearing that such practices were ever put an end to? Chaucer in the "*Sompnour's Tale*" relates how the friar performed the act of gallantry in question with all due activity and zeal. As soon as the mistress of the house enters the room

— "he riseth up full courtly  
And her embraceth in his armes narrow  
And kisseth her sweet, and chirkeeth as a sparrow  
With his lippes."

Cavendish in his "*Life of Cardinal Wolsey*" gives an account of going to the "Castle of M. de Crequi," a French nobleman, "and very nigh of blood to Louis XII., where," he says, "I being in a fair, great dining chamber, where the table was covered for dinner, I attended my lady's coming; and, after she came thither out of her own chamber, she received me most gently, like one of noble estate, having a train of twelve gentlewomen. And when she with her train came all out, she said to me—'Forasmuch as ye be an Englishman, whose custom is in your country to kiss all ladies and gentlewomen without offence, and although it be not so here in this realm (of France), yet will I be so bold as to kiss you, and so shall all my maidens.' By means whereof I kissed my lady and all her women. Then went she to her dinner, being as nobly served as I have seen any of her estate here in England."

In the same reign, Erasmus writes to a friend, describing the beauty, the courtesy, and gentleness of the English ladies, in glowing terms, and this custom as one never sufficiently to be praised. He tells him that if he were to come to England he would never be satisfied with remaining for ten years, but must wish to live and die here.

A Spanish pamphlet in the library of the British Museum, dated 1804, gives an account of the ceremonies observed during the residence of the Duke de Frias (Ambassador Plenipotentiary from the Spanish Court, in England), on the accession of James I. In that, the writer says—"The ambassador kissed Her Majesty's hands, craving at the same time permission to salute the ladies present, a custom of which the non-observance on such occasions is deeply resented by the fair sex of this country;" and leave was accordingly given.—*Ellis's Letters on English History*.

Again, when the celebrated Bulstrode Whitelocke was at the court of Christina, Queen of Sweden, as ambassador from Cromwell, he waited on her on May-day to invite her "to take the air, and some little collation, which he had provided as her humble servant." Having obtained her consent, she, with several ladies of her court accompanied him; and Her Majesty, "both in supper-time and afterwards," being "full of pleasantries and gaiety of spirits, among other frolics, commanded him to teach her ladies the English mode of salutation; which, after some pretty defences, their lips obeyed, and Whitelocke most readily."—*Gentleman's Magazine*.

From these passages, it is evident that the custom was as much admired by the ladies of other countries as it was peculiar to this.

Whytford's "*Pyre of Perfection*" has been quoted to prove that objection was taken to the Bacio at the time of the Reformation; but Whytford objected, not only to kissing, but also to every sort of salutation, even to shaking of hands, among religious persons. He says, "It becometh not, therefore, the persones religious to follow the manner of secular persones, that in their congresses, or common meetyngs or departyngs, do use to kisse, take hands, or such other touchings."

John Bunyan gives an amusing account of his scruples on the subject in his "*Grace Abounding*:"—"When I have seen good

men salute those women that they have visited, or that have visited them, I have my objections against it: and when they have answered that it was but a piece of civility, I have told them that it was not a comely sight. Some, indeed, have urged the holy kiss; but, then, I have asked them why they made balks? Why did they salute the most handsome and let the ill-favored go?" This last question was, no doubt, rather perplexing to the good men to answer; but here Bunyan proves that very few were troubled by his scruples. The abandonment of the custom is said to have been "a part of that French code of politeness which Charles II. introduced on his restoration." The last traces of its existence are perhaps in one or two letters from country gentlemen, in the "*Spectator*," one of which occurs in No. 240. The writer relates of himself that he had always been in the habit, even in great assemblies, of saluting all the ladies round; but a town-bred gentleman had lately come into the neighborhood and introduced his "fine reserved airs." "Whenever," says the writer, "he came into a room, he made a profound bow and fell back, then recovered with a soft air and made a bow to the next, and so on. This is taken for the present fashion, and there is no young gentleman within several miles of this place who has been kissed ever since his first appearance among us."

And all these classical quotations and the remarks thereon are to be found in William Chappell's interesting book about old tunes, in which are love ditties innumerable by Arditìs of that happy period when the Bacio was a national institution and "all the go," not only as it is now, but in a far more satisfactory form. It is still the rage in Germany, as the street boys and organ boys hourly prove, while the ecstatic way in which the men embrace each other in public, shows that, as a practice, it is still most popular. The old fashion excited the indignation of my friends, who declared it was monstrous that men, especially military men, should kiss each other in the streets. An organ under my window playing the celebrated waltz tune in *Do*, in spite of my "don't" and a reward to go into the next street, gave rise to all that has been said on this delicate subject. The organ has moved on, and is now, *Laus Deo*, out of hearing, so that the account of our travels can be continued in peace and quietness.

By the time we reached Hanover, the *douanier* at Harburg, and his "insolence of office," were forgotten in the pleasant anticipation of all we were to see in the capital town. But disappointment awaited us. Rain—remorseless, uncompromising rain, blighted our prospects, and blasted all our hopes. It is impossible to do any sight-seeing cheerfully in a deluge. At least we found it so. Then, again, Hanover itself was shedding tears, and to be cheerful in a town of mourning is even more impossible. We alighted at the British Hotel, and, the morning following our arrival, we hired a broken-down vehicle, which took us to the summer palace of the banished royal family, but the summer palace was shut up, and looked very dreary and miserable in the wet. We went to some of the principal shops in the town; they were deserted, and their keepers, when interrogated, followed the example of the weather, and wept like so many children at the loss they had experienced in the forced departure of the Court. "Ah," said one,

"we would give all we possess if our good King and Queen were only restored to us."

At the British Hotel lived Count Stolberg, the Governor of Hanover *pro tem*. This representative of the Russian Government, for the time being, seemed very much like "the man in possession," who either from preference or fear of spoiling the furniture, inhabits the kitchen instead of the better rooms of a house of which he has the care. Why the Governor located himself at an hotel, when the palaces were empty, I could not understand. The town presented a most melancholy appearance: shops closed, houses shut up, signs of desolation all around. We were glad enough to leave it. During the journey to Cologne, I entered into conversation with a German, and expressed my regret at the sad fate of Hanover. He assured me I was mistaken—that the inhabitants were never so happy and prosperous. I told him how certain I was that such was not the case, and that the return of the King was most eagerly desired. No such thing; it was quite the reverse. As my fellow-traveler was a Prussian, we changed the subject of conversation, feeling sure we should never agree on that which had been started.

"Here we are in Eau de Cologne!" exclaimed one of our party, as we came to our journey's end. I am not sure that the *mot* was intended, but incline to think it was a slip of the tongue; however, considering the wet weather which had followed us, it was taken credit for as an impromptu witticism, and must be recorded as such.

In Cologne, to the Hotel du Nord, which we found in a state of great commotion, brilliantly illuminated, a large flag flying on the roof, the fountain in the court-yard, usually very insignificant, springing some thirty feet into the air, bright red stair carpets and matting laid down, the entrance and corridors tastily decorated with flowers and wreaths of laurel. What had happened? The mystery was soon explained. *Der Kron Prinz* and family were staying at the hotel. They had been *en route* for England, but the doctors having forbidden the Princess, our Princess Royal, to travel further, they had changed their plans and remained in Cologne some days.

The royal guests did great honor to mine host of the Nord in staying at his hostelry, but severely tried the loyalty of some more ordinary customers by monopolizing all the best apartments. "No rooms on the first floor—first floor all occupied by the Kron Prinz," said the landlord with pride. I was well enough satisfied to get any room, at the late hour at which we arrived; but it was not so with all of us, one of the party complaining loudly that so much consideration was shown to royalty.

Although we had "done" Cologne some few weeks before, we visited the Cathedral again and went to the Museum. An intelligent guide showed us this time over the Dom. He directed our attention to the painted windows presented to the Cathedral by Ludovic, King of Bavaria (Lola Montes' Ludwig), in 1843. They are very splendid, and cost, it is said, £9,000. The modern windows in the church are finer and more effective than the ancient, especially those in the nave. We were shown, of course, the casket containing the skulls and bones of the Magi. The sacristan told us he was present when it was opened three years ago, when many doctors and authorities examined the bones and pronounced them genu-

ine and 1,800 years old! It's true enough that they can be traced authentically 1,400 years—long enough to render them interesting to the curious in such matters.

The Cologne Museum is a depot of very strange paintings and old things, such as mosaics, sculpture, and sarcophagi, dug up in the neighborhood of the city at different times. A modern marble figure, by Voss, called "Lorelei," is the most remarkable work of art of the present day in the collection. Steidle's frescoes are good, and there is a picture or two by Bendeman, better than the rest, but not so excellent as to excite admiration. The catalogue is a curiosity in its way. There are no specimens of the great masters in the Museum, but to give importance and bulk to the catalogue, memoirs of Rubens, Vandyck, and others, pompously head the list of pictures in the various styles of painting. While walking through the galleries, wondering at the horrible pictures of martyrdom exhibited, our guide suddenly evinced signs of impatience. He was very sorry, he said, pulling a pair of white kid gloves out of his pocket, but he had to escort the royal family to the railway station—it was already time they had started. We had had enough of the Museum and agreed to go back to the hotel. A regimental band was playing; there was a crowd round the door; the fountain sprang higher than ever into the air; the family luggage of the Crown Prince lay scattered about the court-yard. Every preparation was being made for departure. The ladies waited some time in the hall, and were at length gratified by receiving a smiling recognition of their obeisance from the Princess as she passed them, and by patting one of the juvenile princes on the head as H. R. H. got into the carriage. The landlord's daughter, in festal array, handed the Princess a huge bouquet, the Crown Prince said a few words to the landlord, and then, amid some very weak cheering, the royal travelers drove off to the railway station, followed by their suite.

I was at luncheon when they started. A quarter of an hour elapsed, and what a change came over the Hotel du Nord! The red stair carpets disappeared—the flowers were removed as if by magic—the fountain ceased playing—the old porter slept soundly in his lodge—the waiters were away dividing the *largesse* which had been left them by the departed Prince. Would I like to see the State apartments, asked the landlord, who had hardly recovered from the effects of the short conversation with his future king. I went through the suit of rooms at the host's invitation. The chairs were being hurriedly covered over by industrious *stuben mädchen*, the table-cloth had been as rapidly taken off, and the common deal table, which it had concealed, was exposed to view. In ten minutes more all traces of royalty had passed away, and the Hotel du Nord became again the temporary habitation of ordinary travelers.

From Cologne to Ghent, on our way home, for it was getting too late in the year to extend our tour. Experience at the Hotel Royal in Ghent convinced us we had made no change for the better on leaving Germany as far as the *cuisine* was concerned; indeed, the same observation applied to all other amusements as well as those of the table. We went through the usual course of sight-seeing, and visited the convent village of Les Béguinages, where there are one

hundred and three nunneries "all of a row," inhabited by seven hundred nuns of the order of Sainte Bega. In a house outside the gates of the village, lace made by the sisters is sold, and a picture, said to be by Raphael, is exhibited. I can say nothing as to the worth or worthlessness of the nuns' handiwork, but the picture—a head of Christ—is hardly good enough to deceive the veriest neophyte in works of art. It would serve Madame Rachel's purpose well, as showing to what perfection "the beautiful for ever" principle can be brought. It is an injustice to the holy sisters that such a deception should be attempted in their behalf, for you are expected to buy the lace or give something for seeing the pseudo Raphael, which latter is certainly not worth paying for. We intended to attend service in the chapel of the nunnery, but unfortunately arrived too late to do so. It was just over as we reached the building, and the nuns were leaving. A singular effect they made as the seven hundred came out in two and three at a time. The stream of black gown and white coifs seemed interminable. They quickly disappeared, as the houses of all adjoined the chapel, which, with the gates of the village, was closed to all strangers as soon as service terminated. Thence to the Cathedral.

It is All Souls' Day, and High Mass is being celebrated—the Bishop of Ghent, assisted by a large body of priests, officiating. The chancel is crowded, and the gaudy robes of the dignitaries of the Church shine brightly in the rays of the autumnal sun. The service is performed with all imaginable pomp and ceremony. But in that part of the church which is open to the public there is not much appearance of sanctity or devotion. It might be the side scenes of a theatre for what is going on there. A woman is busy sweeping; a boy goes round with a long stick to light the tapers; strangers, accompanied by their *valets de place*, are criticising the pictures by Rubens and Vandyck, which are uncovered, and can be seen for nothing on holy days. From where I take my stand, near one of the columns, I hear an animated conversation between a young couple, who have just met by appointment. The lady complains of having been kept waiting, the gentleman declares business detained him. They discuss last night's opera, and presently leave the church together. We walk round the chancel and watch the priests and their doings; but the choir, singing half a tone flatter than the organ, makes it impossible to remain there long. I never heard such music. On passing down the aisles to leave the building, a woman with a child in her arms accosts us, begging. I give her a few copper, and, of a sudden, a crowd of beggars surround me. Where they all come from I know not. It is with difficulty I make my way through them and get out of the church, thinking the while how much wiser it would be for the Bishop of Ghent to attend more to the doings of his congregation and less to the vanities of those outward forms and ceremonies in which he was then engaged. In the evening to the theatre, where the opera was announced in the following quaint style:—

No. 20. Gand, Vendredi 1er Novembre 18.7.

MESSIEURS,  
J'ai l'honneur de vous donner connaissance de la composition du spectacle qui sera donné aujourd'hui.  
8me représentation du 2me mois de l'abonnement.